

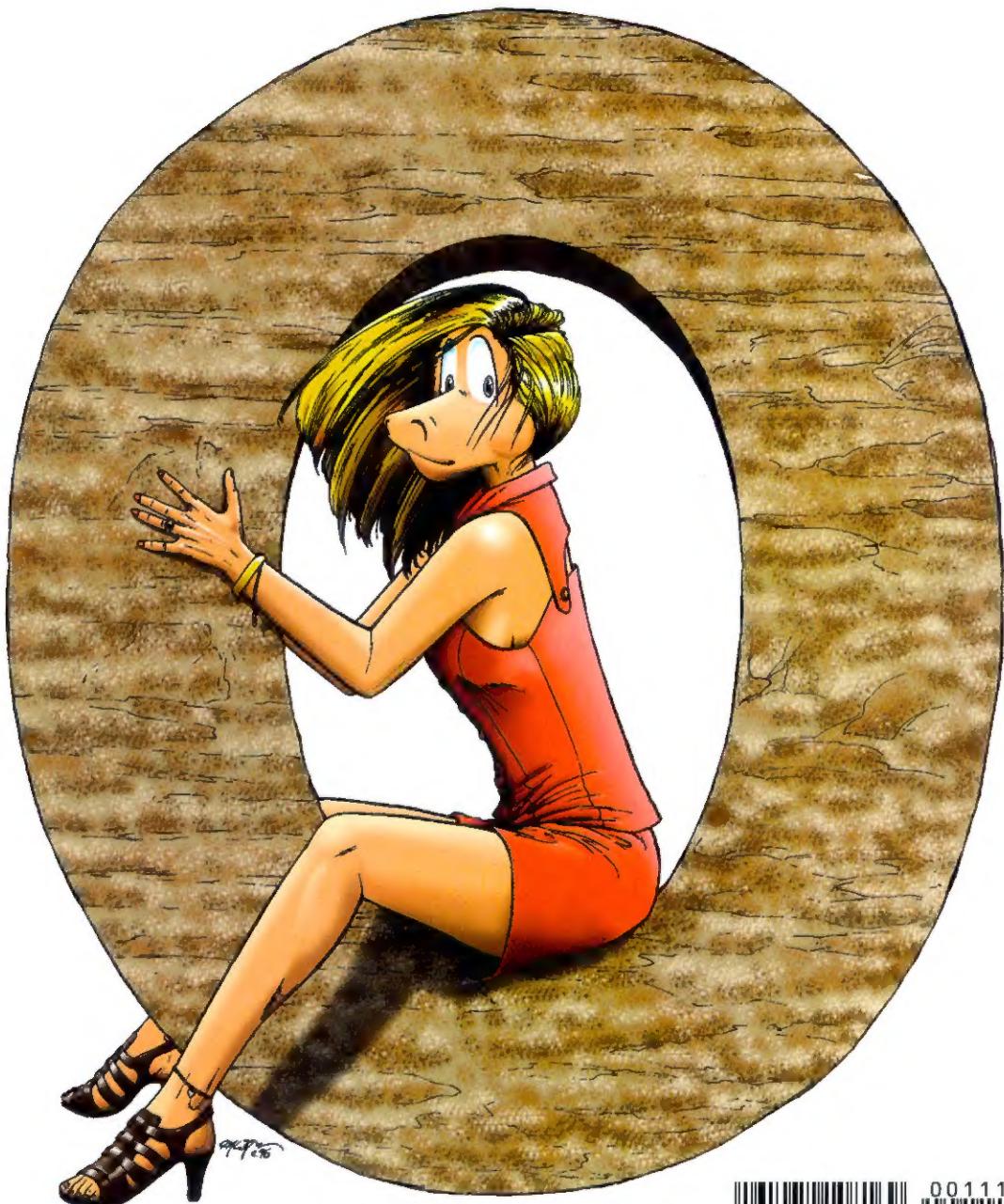
AN ANTARCTIC PRESS PUBLICATION FOR MATURE AUDIENCES • \$2.95 \$4.10 CAN



MARTIN WAGNER'S

Hepcats

NUMBER 0 NOVEMBER 1996



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Antarctic Blast

November 1996

Write To Us at: Antarctic Press/7272 Wurzbach, #204/San Antonio, TX 78240
Visit Our Web Site at: <http://www.texas.net/users/antarc/>

ANTARCTIC PRESS Attractions

subject to change

- Amazing Adventures of Prof. Jones #1
- Change Commander Goku #2
- Perazim #2
- Zombie Boy #1
- Furlough #47
- Ninja High School #54
- Hepcats #0
- Hepcats #0 CD Edition
- Cell #2
- Tigers of Terra #24
- Luftwaffe 1946 #3
- Dragon Flux #3
- October Yen #3
- Silbster #18
- Silbster TPB #2
- Fantastic Panic Vol. 2, #7
- Hepcats T-Shirt #1
- Warrior Nun #1-6 Signed Set
- A-Bomb #15(Venus, Adult)
- Genus #21(Venus, Adult)
- The Barr Girls #1(Venus, Adult)

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Cog, loves turkey

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Judu, loves candied yams



GOBBLE! GOBBLE!

by Jennifer Leal



ey! Jennifer here, the newbie at Antarctic Press. While only having been on the job for about 4 months, I can honestly say- "I HAVE THE COOLEST JOB!!" What other job would allow you to read comic books all day, hang out and occasionally pretend to work?? Just kidding. A highlight of working here is that I'm sent out to conventions. For example, ANIME AMERICA in San Jose, OTAKON in Baltimore, HEROES CON in Charlotte, and the Cleburne Fantasy Fair in Cleburne. Not only did I have the time of my life, but I got to meet a lot of extremely cool fans and new friends in the process. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the SAN DIEGO CON (D'OH) last year, but I'll be there in 97 with bells on! Until then, let me PLUG ya!

• It's official, the Warrior Nun action figure is a huge success!!! Orders are in and they are phenomenal. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you to everyone who supported us! And just between you and me, the next action-figure might be Shotgun Mary!! I'll keep you posted.

• I recently caught the talented (and SEXY) Pat Duke, our Special Projects Editor and resident Photoshop God! sketching and brainstorming for kick ass story ideas for ROBOTECH!! With Pat and such gifted artists as Ben Dunn, Fred Perry, and Joe Wight, working on the project, it is sure to meet every Robotech fan's expectations! For those of you attending AntarctiCon, there will

be a special preview of the new series.

• What's AntarctiCon, you ask? Well, in case you haven't heard, Antarctic Press is hosting San Antonio's comic con of the year, nay, DECADE!! It will be held at the **Embassy Suites Hotel Northwest, Saturday February 22nd and Sunday February 23rd**. Featured artists will include: Adam Warren, Dave Johnson, Robert De Jesus, Martin Wagner and everyone from Antarctic Press!! Need more info? Write to me at AntarctiCon c/o Jennifer P.O. Box 290221, San Antonio, Texas 78229 - I'll send you a flyer!

• The rumors are TRUE!! Ben Dunn, Joe Wight, Ted Nomura and Fred Perry will be doing a special anniversary issue for Ninja High School, Twilight X, Tigers of Terra, and Gold Digger. This issue will be marking the TENTH anniversary of NHS and Tigers of Terra and the FIFTH anniversary of Twilight X and Gold Digger. Available in December, just in time for the holiday season. Don't be an Olin Fnard and miss out on this one!!

• Also available in time for the holiday season is the Warrior Nun/Avengelyne crossover! Keep your eyes peeled, because it's coming to a comic store near you!!

Love and Kisses -

Jennifer Leal

Hepcats

CREATED, WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY

MARTIN WAGNER

AT RHINOCEROUS STUDIOS, AUSTIN, TEXAS

SUMMER-AUTUMN 1996

COLORED ON ADOBE PHOTOSHOP 3.0 BY

ROBERT ACOSTA PP. 8-11, 14, 16-17, 20-21

PAT DUKE Title page, PP. 4-7, 12-13, 19

MARTIN WAGNER Cover, CD art, PP. 3, 15, 18, 22

SPECIAL THANKS TO

JOEMING DUNN

DENISE VOSKUIL

ISSUE NUMBER 0

NOVEMBER 1996



ANTARCTIC PRESS
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK!

Damn! Just when you think you know what is happening in your life, along come enormous changes to throw everything into a new light. Many times these changes are bad, and we spend our time winded, clutching our chests and trying to catch our breath, wondering what happened, what the hell hit us? That has been the story of my life for the past nine years, I can tell you.

And then something good happens, a tiny bright spark in the void.

For those of you new to this comic, some history. *Hepcats* began nine years ago, on June 1, 1987, in the pages of *The Daily Texan*, the student newspaper of the University of Texas at Austin. *Hepcats* the comic book made its debut in 1989, as a title I self-published under my Double Diamond Press imprint. However, this was a bad time for small-press independent comics. In the early '90's all that the industry wanted were superhero comics, and *Hepcats* struggled through nearly nonexistent sales for years, despite generous acclaim from the people who were actually able to find it and read it. Associations with my colleagues in self-publishing, such as Dave Sim and Jeff Smith (both of whom are friends to this day), helped, but after a while the whole thing was treading water. By 1993 my schedule, erratic to begin with, hit a dead rut. Only two issues came out in 1994. Since then, the only book I could manage to publish was *Snowblind, Part One*, another trade collection, still widely available.

What exactly was the problem? Well, I'm not the world's greatest businessman, for one thing. I'm a world-class self-promoter, but not hot with number-crunching, and the financial problems had mounted to a point I couldn't do anything about it. The debts run up in the early years had gotten so unmanageable, particularly after my divorce in 1991, that when the book did start making a little money after issue #11, I was still paying these old bills off and had nothing left for new material. Sales of the trades kept me sputtering along, but clearly nothing was happening to wipe the slate clean and get the gears really moving again.

Many fans sympathized but many others didn't. You can explain financial problems until you're blue in the face to many people, but the fact is, for a fan, most of what they know is what they see when they walk into a comic shop. If they gaze at the racks and they don't see your new comic, well, there's very little slack many of them are willing to cut you no matter what the reality of your situation is. After a while I quit going to cons and posting on the Internet simply because I was tired of being a target.

In the fall of 1995 I announced that I was ceasing publication of the comic series and was going to trades only. (For a time prior to this I had been talking to another big publisher, but I was getting more negative vibes than positive ones, and even their own editor-in-chief was begging me not to sign with them.) Most fans greeted this news positively, applauding me for hitting upon a solution that would be workable for me in the long run. Secretly, though, I must admit I was wondering to myself just how I was going to pull this off.

Enter Antarctic Press.

In spring of 1996 I came home from lunch one afternoon to a message on my machine from Joe Dunn. I called him back and he invited me down to San Antonio. Within a week we had come to an agreement and signed on the dotted line.

In my years in the industry I had met both Joe and Ben, and the tireless Matt High had been a Hepfan from way back. But I'd never really associated closely with the AP gang, mainly because I was off with my self-publishing pals and was trumpeting the virtues of that way of doing things. I must say that despite my failings in the self-publishing arena, I am still an advocate of self-publishing. But if one is going to get into it, one must have as clear a head for business as for one's artistic vision, and must have the organization to manage both equally so that they both get done. What can happen otherwise is too much of one thing and too little of another. If your personality

type isn't just right, you can spread yourself too thin, and become the archetypal jack of all trades, master of none.

In my case, things had gotten so bad that my reputation as a shitty self-publisher had upstaged *Hepcats'* reputation as a cool comic book. That was bad. That was when things had to give.

Since I'd never become close buds with Ben and Joe before this year, it was both surprising and deeply flattering that they were so enthusiastic about *Hepcats*. AP welcomed me warmly. They wanted to bring *Hepcats* on board the AP wagon, giving it massive support and, for the first time since the Texan, a real home. That's probably why I chose to tell another day-in-the-life-of-college tale in this new color issue; because the finalizing of the deal with AP brought back memories of those days, when everything seemed so easy and full of hope, when all I had to do was draw my strip for the day, and perfect strangers got all excited when they met me. No, I'm not in this business for the ego-boost, but knowing that I'm producing again, and giving people stories and drawings that will bring a little light into their day, well...that's a joy I haven't felt so strongly since about 1989, and it feels so good to feel it again after it had almost been bled right out of me.

Joey, Gunther, Arnie, Erica...I almost lost you. But I'm back, right here, gang...right here.

It's 1997. Welcome to *Hepcats*.

Under the new deal, AP will be re-releasing the first 12 issues of *Hepcats* I self-published on a monthly basis over the coming year. This will give me time to finish the rest of *Snowblind*, so that those issues can come out either monthly or bi-monthly after that. Then we just take it from there. For old fans who are going crazy over the idea of a whole year of reprints, I am replacing the original letter columns of most of the back issues with new backup stories and pin-ups, as well as new covers, just so you won't feel totally gypped. Keep in mind that there will be a whole new audience discovering *Hepcats* with its AP issues, so I hope you old Hepfans aren't too disappointed. You're important, don't forget that.

No matter who you are or where you live in the world, you can sign up absolutely free to our mailing list, which will get you an approximately thrice yearly newsletter, plus whatever other goodies I think of on a whim. Just put your name and address on a postcard and mail it to:

Hepcats Information Service

P.O. Box 27157

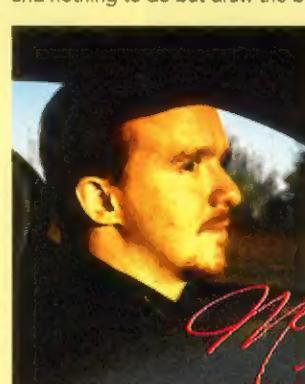
Austin, TX 78755-2157 USA

Fan mail and other ravings for publication should also be sent to this P.O. Box—not to A.P.—and can also be e-mailed to hepcats@eden.com

Finally, you can check out *Hepcats* on the World Wide Web, every day if you have nothing better to do. The URL is:

<http://www.mcs.net/~dvoskuil/hepcats/>

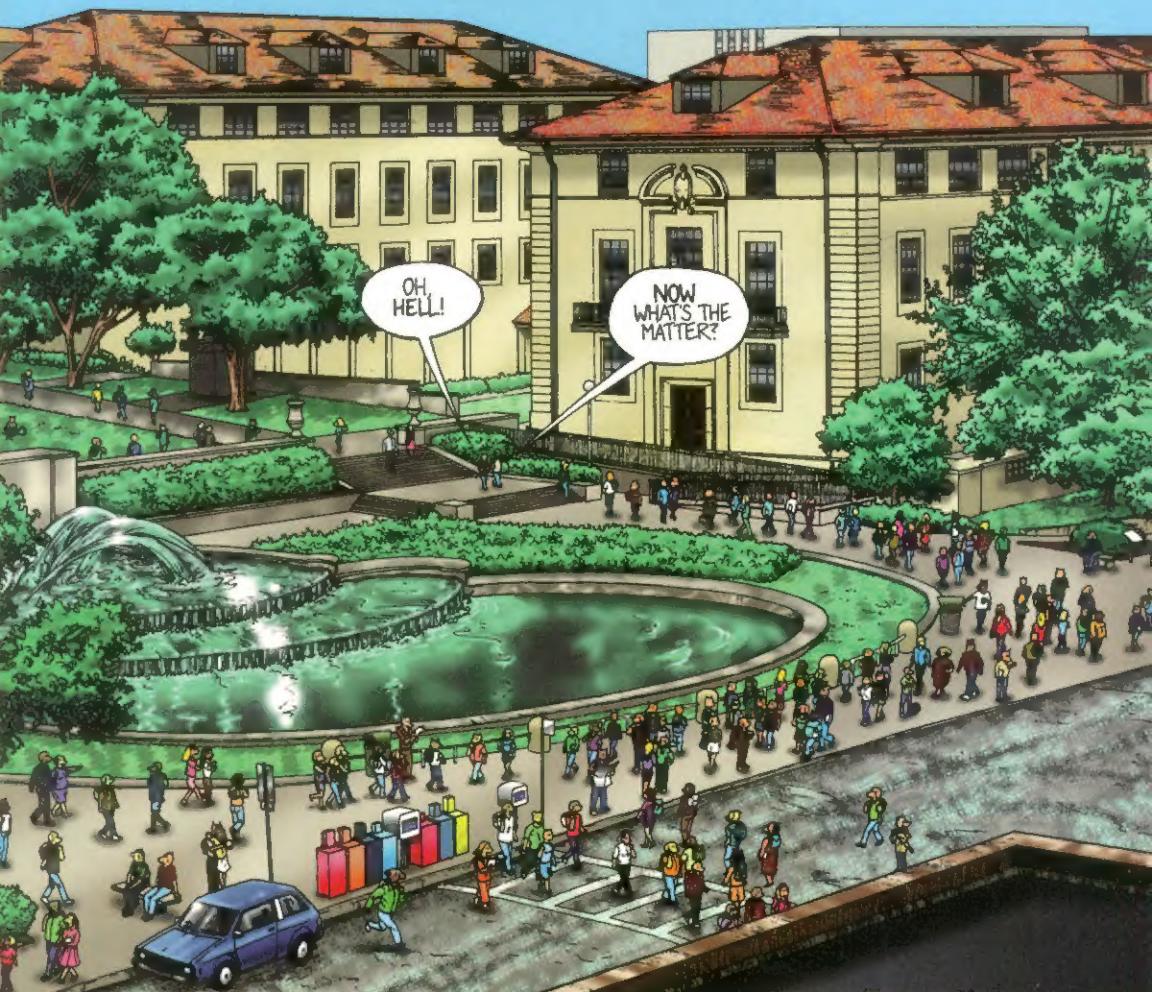
Once again, I'm glad to be back, with a million fewer pressures and nothing to do but draw the book I love. Onward.

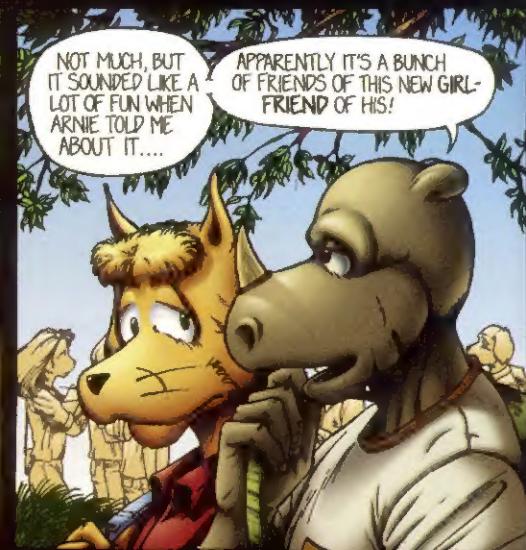


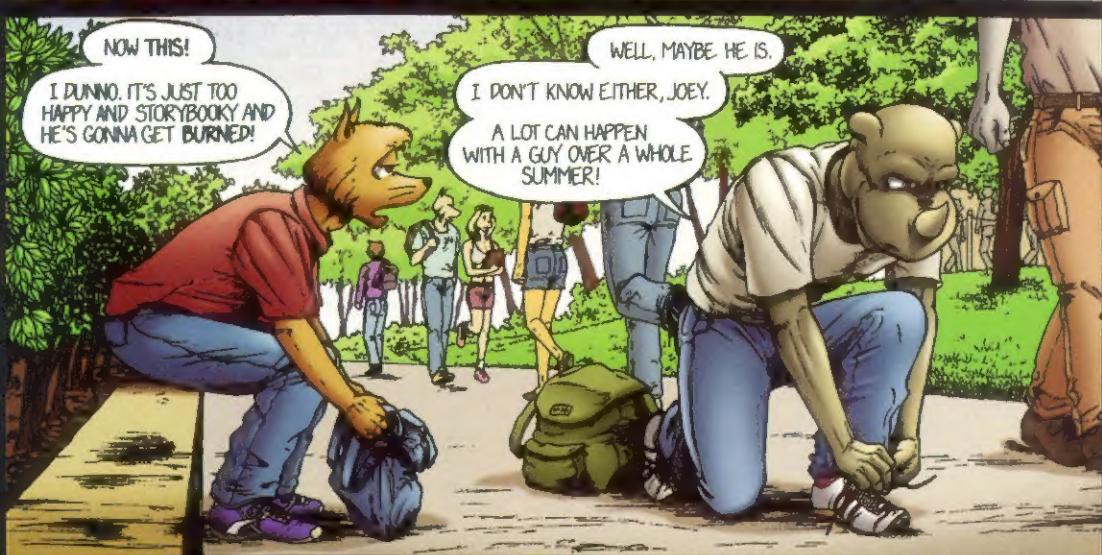
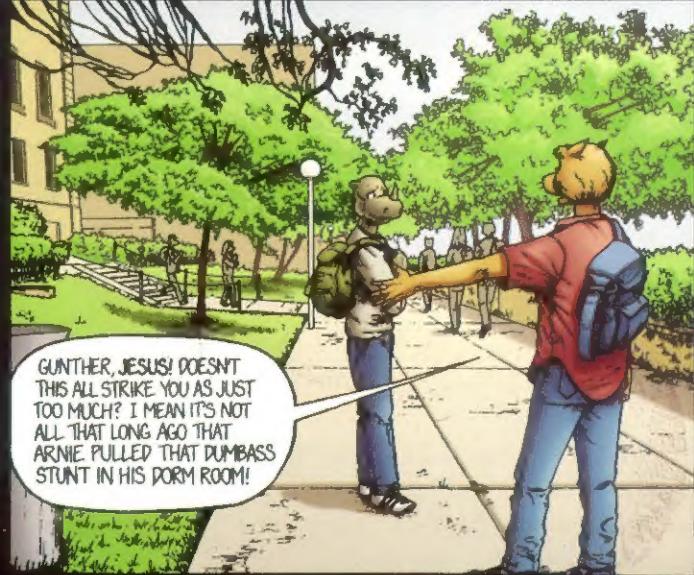
M.W.
—Martin Wagner
Austin, Texas
Summer 1996

Photograph by Hollye Hitt

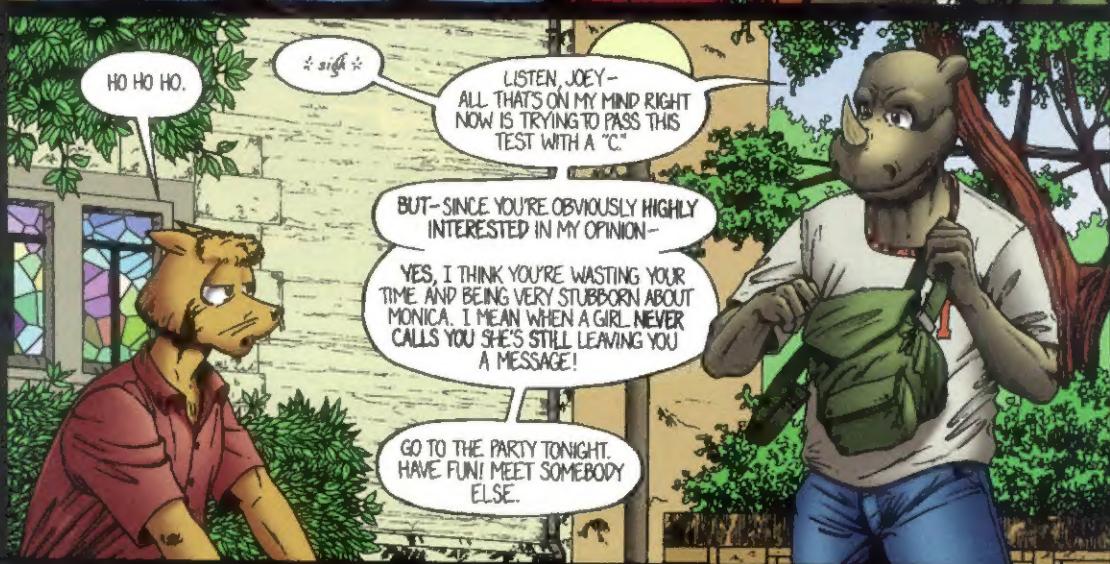
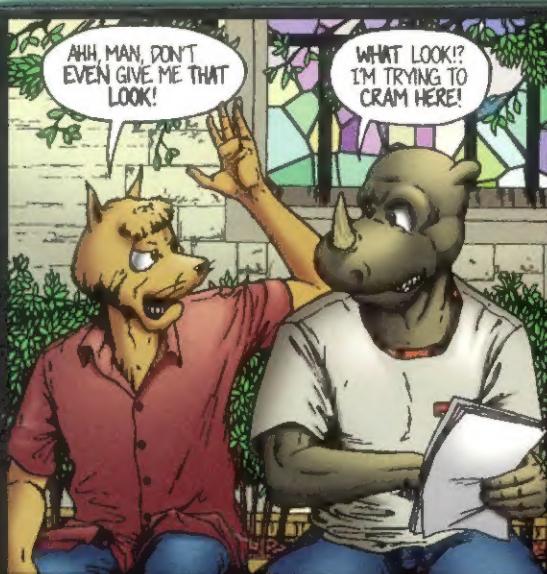
friday.













YEAH, IT'S FUN!
HE'S FUN.
VERY SWEET.

WE'VE ALREADY
SWAPPED KEYS. CAN YOU
BELIEVE IT?



OH, DON'T GIVE ME
THAT! YOU AND JASON MOVED
IN AFTER ONLY A WEEK
AND A HALF.

THIS IS JUST
HOUSEKEYS, GIRL!

UH-HUH - SURE -

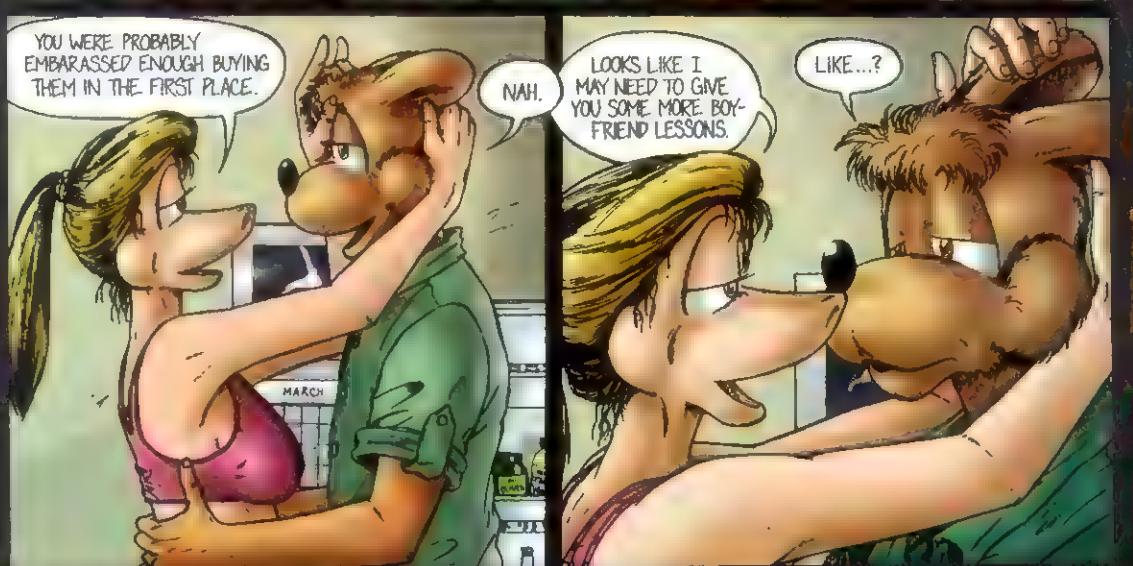
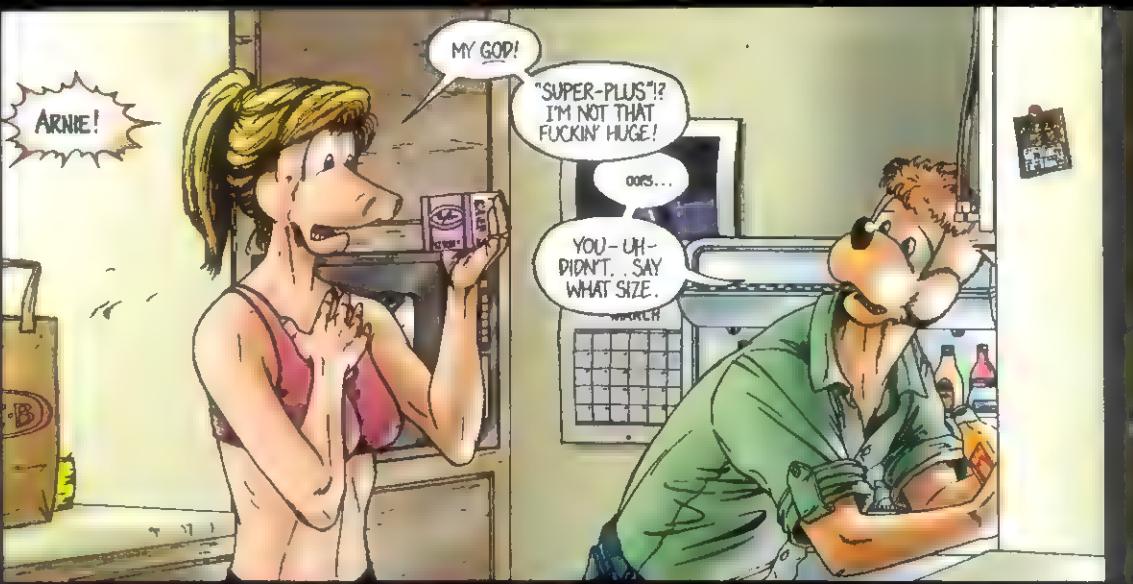


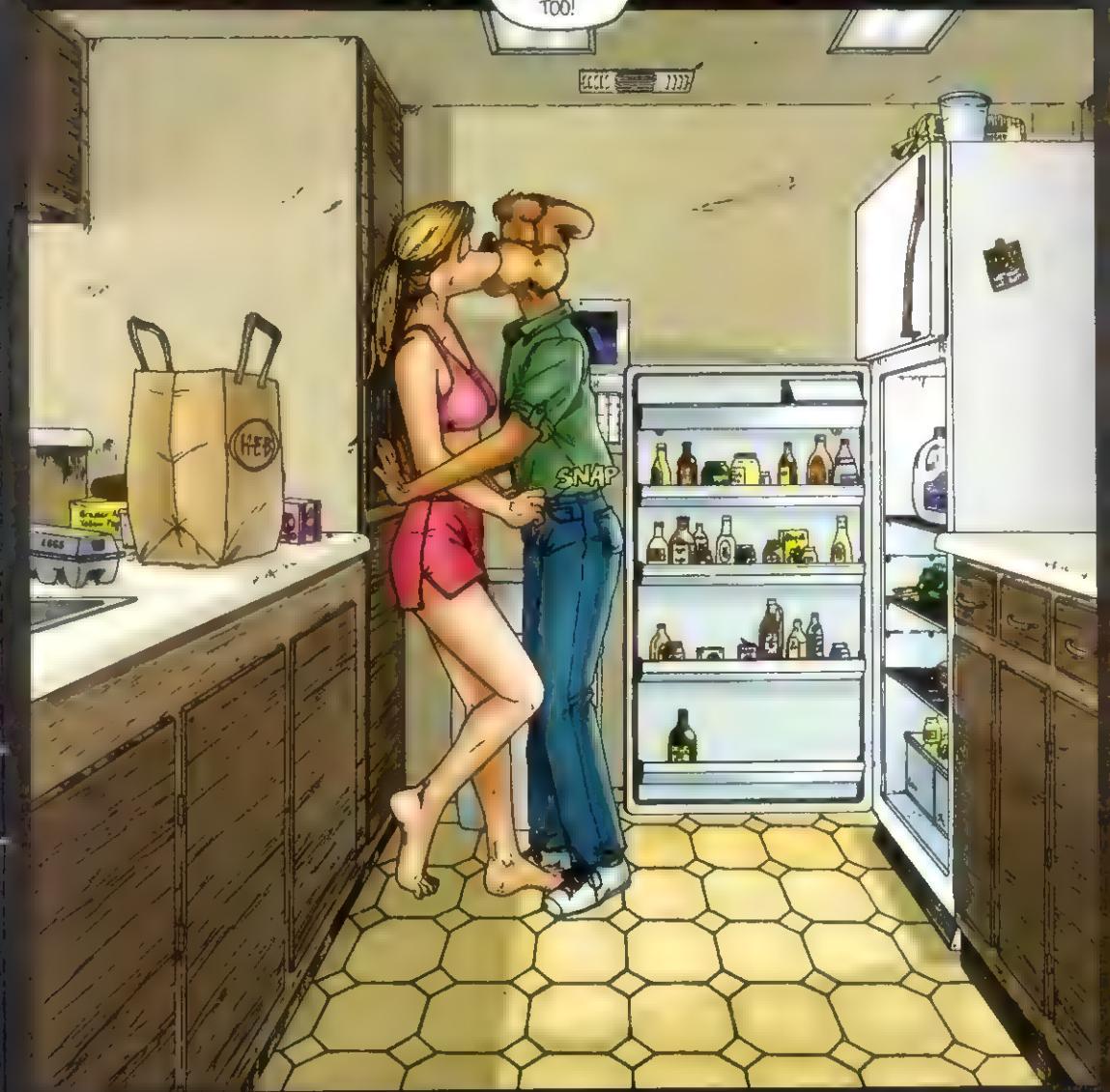
LISTEN, HERE
HE IS NOW!
HI, BABY - !

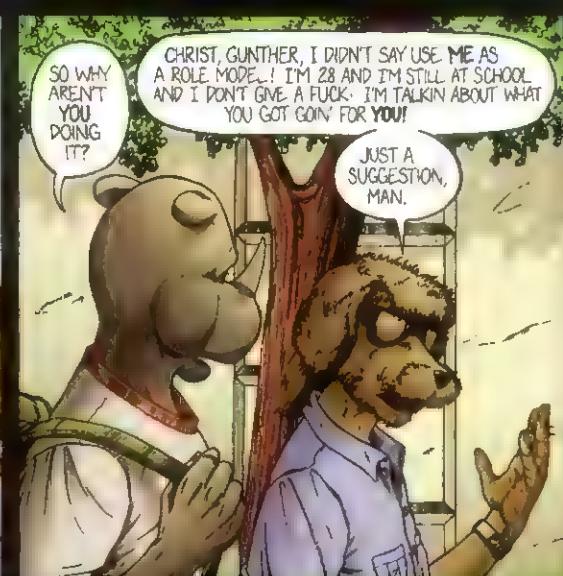
“HI, ARNIE”
SHE SAYS.

UM-HELLO
BACK.



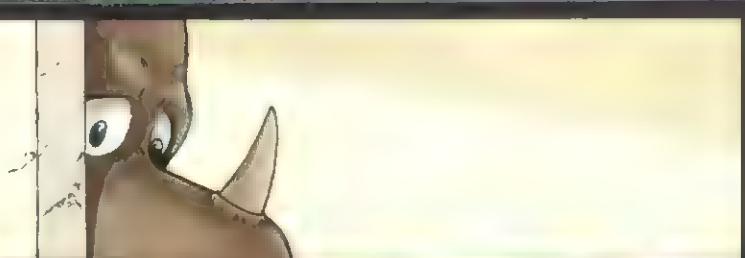


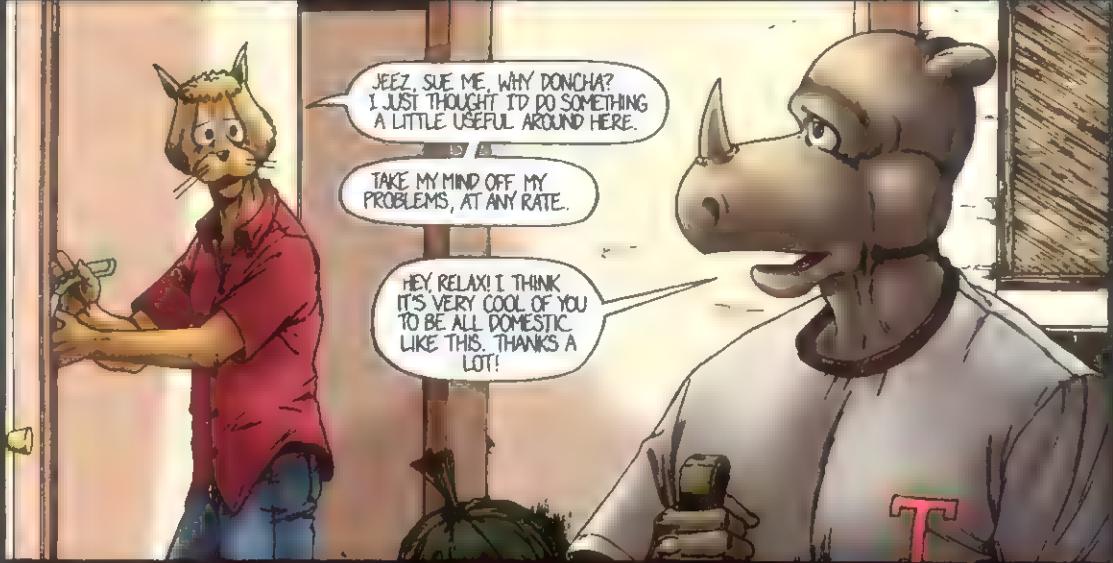


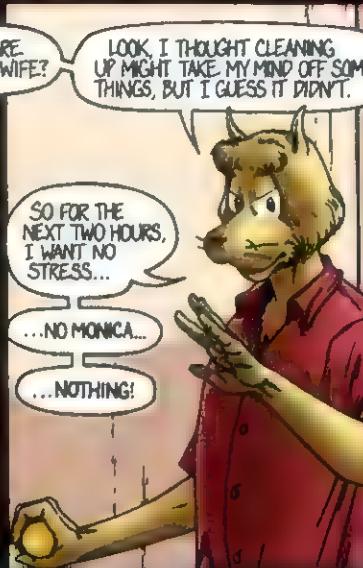
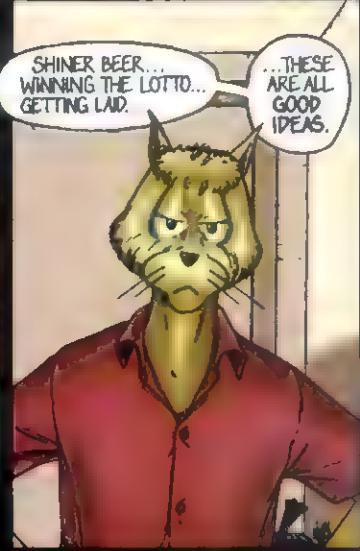




















SO GUNTHIER
WHAT DO WE THINK
OF THE NEW GIRLFRIEND?

WELL, SHE'S
DEFINITELY
FINE!

SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN
A LITTLE EAGER TO WIN
US OVER

THEN AGAIN MAYBE
SHE'S JUST A TOUCHY
KISSY TYPE OF PERSON



SON OF A
BITCH!

MY TWENTY! IT WAS ON
THE FLOORBOARD! I MUST HAVE
DROPPED IT LAST NIGHT OR
SOMETHING.

WELL, THIS MIGHT NOT BE
SUCH A BAD NIGHT AFTER
ALL.

YEAH, YOU DO SEEM
TO BE IN A BETTER
MOOD THAN YOU
WERE BEFORE.

WHAT IS IT?

YEAH, WELL,
YOU KNOW.
I GUESS I GOT THINKING
ABOUT THE WHOLE MONICA
DEAL. ABOUT HOW I'M JUST
STRESSING MYSELF OUT...

I MEAN,
IF SHE DOESN'T
WANT TO SEE ME, I
OUGHTA JUST
GO HAVE A GOOD
TIME... LIKE
YOU SAID.

WHAT IF MONICA'S AT
THE PARTY? WILL THAT
BE A PROBLEM?

HELL, I
DON'T KNOW!

I GUESS I'LL ASK
HER TO GET ME A
BEER.

HA HA!

NICE SHOOTING,
KID. DON'T GET COCKY!



DEAR Hepcats

A NOTE TO NEW READERS AND OLD

Longtime Hepfans will remember the lengthy, 6 pages or more free-for-all lettercols of my self-publishing days. Well, the AP editions will only have about two pages of letters each, which I'll choose for publication based upon how thoughtful and well-written they are, not necessarily because they might be gushing with praise. I will, however, summarily ignore any mail that is outright offensive, profane, or otherwise personally insulting, since it's my humble opinion that if you don't like me or my work you don't have to be here. I'll answer when I can but I do apologize that I won't be able to print here all of the cool mail I get like in the old days. However, those of you who use e-mail might like knowing that I will answer every single e-mail I get in the web page version of this lettercol. Check the introduction on page 2 of this comic for the URL. So make your voices heard, you unwashed masses you.

Hi Martin,

Received your reply and a copy of the contract via Os. We are quite happy for you to use "Infant Phenomenon," my only concern being the conflicting signals that it will send out in relation to "Heaven Taste" for anyone who hasn't heard us (and that includes most of your readers I would think). Are we ambient or are we industrial metal? The answer of course is both, and more, but I fear in isolation these tracks may just confuse people. But on the other hand we like both tracks (and so do you) so maybe I'm just being paranoid.

I'm really pleased to hear that you're using all of "Heaven Taste"—in answer to your question regarding its original appearance, it was wasted on the B-side of the "Painting Paradise" single. Being a 21 minute instrumental track it was difficult to find a home for it in 1993 when it was done. I'm glad that it's going to get more exposure on your compilation. Best wishes,

**STEVEN WILSON
(NO-MAN)**

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HERTS,
ENGLAND

P.O. BOX 27157
AUSTIN, TX 78755-2157
hepcats@eden.com

bands) to have them on the CD. My personal favorite No-Man CD is *Flowermouth* (which you can only find as an import here in the States), though neophytes can be equally well-served by the US release *Loveblows & Lovecries—A Confession*, which you can probably pick up most anywhere. Their most recent disc is the wildly eclectic *Wild Opera*, also only an import. Just get ready to fucking dance when you pop any No-Man CD in your player!

Steven Wilson is also the mastermind behind another amazing musical outfit, *Porcupine Tree*. This band's sound is more rocking, more mid-70's progressive, like Pink Floyd circa *Wish You Were Here/Animals*. They've just released *Signify* which is jaw-droppingly brilliant. Find this stuff.

Actually I am blown away by all of the bands on *Radio Hepcats*, and I'm orgiastically grateful that they've given me one of the best compilation CD's I've got in my whole personal 900+ disc library! (Though my own collection is dwarfed by my friend Thad's, whose 2000 CD archive should qualify him to receive his own FCC call letters any day now.) I love music, and it was a wonderful bit of serendipity that AP themselves suggested doing a compilation disc; I'd never even considered it! I think

Those of you who are scratching your heads and wondering, "Just what did that letter have to do with anything pertaining to this comic?" obviously are not yet among the lucky people who have purchased the deluxe edition of this issue, containing the *Radio Hepcats* compact disc! It's 63 minutes of stunning aural bliss and you can get one right this minute by dropping a \$13.00 check (ppd.) in the mail to me at Martin Wagner, P.O. Box 27157, Austin, TX 78755-2157. (Thanks to AP for letting me continue my own mail-order.)

No-Man are one of the best kept secrets in current British pop and it was a profound honor (as it was with all the participating



No-Man's *Flowermouth* and *Porcupine Tree's Signify* two CD's you really need



the melding of alternative comics and music is a natural one, and I'm happy Hepcats is at the forefront! So get Radio Hepcats, gang, and thank me later! (Subtle plug, I know...oops, guess I pissed off the Comics Journal again.)

Martin—

I'm glad to hear you're moving to Antarctic. I know this isn't what you probably want to hear, but I haven't seen an issue of Hepcats in about two years here in Hawaii—and I regularly frequent the 4 or 5 biggest stores. It just isn't making it out to the islands. Antarctic titles do, and I'm looking forward to seeing Hepcats regularly again. I've been reading you since the "Shasta Says" days (that is what it was called, right?) and you deserve much better distribution than you've been getting. I think Snowblind has the potential to be something important in an artistic sense, and it shouldn't be languishing in obscurity (well, it hasn't exactly been "obscure," but you get the idea). Although it's a pity to see another independent forced to sign up with a publisher, the bottom line is that getting read beats not getting read any day—this is a good move.

I'm not sure if you remember me—I interviewed you for Hawaii Public Radio several years ago (and forgot to send you the tape...damn, it's around here somewhere...). I've got a weekly show too—maybe I can get you on for a phoner sometime?

Good luck, and here's hoping the next Hepcats shows up in isle stores real soon—

DAVID STROUP

VIA E-MAIL

As a longtime reader of Hepcats, I picked up Yo at Bookstop when it was still located in the Westgate Mall; I am thrilled to see the book will continue and was sorry to hear of the trouble with self publishing. As a

resident of Austin it's nice to know that some of the folks' work I admire, Berkeley Breathed, Sarah Bird and yourself, have all lived here in Austin as well.

Although I wish that Hepcats would start with the continuation of Snowblind at least I may be able to get some of my friends to read Hepcats as the books are re-released in the next year.

Thank you for not folding up shop but doing a "re-organization" (I hate that word) and continuing the good work I hope will continue for a long time.

A longtime fan from Austin,

ROBERT REID

VIA E-MAIL

Martin!

Hey! I just finished reading the article in Wizard and thought it was great! The art looked good, although I was sad to see the spine break right on Joey's face. The information on the upcoming events was cool along with the story synopses, and I hope the article will attract new people. When I finished reading it however, I got a little worried that it made the book seem too dark. I don't think the humor of the series was emphasized enough. That, and the side bar about your personal life and troubles getting the book out might have given the wrong impression to unfamiliar readers. Lastly, I would have liked to see mention of the CD, and even the web site, since I think it gives a great overview of the books and characters.

Before you think it was all bad, let me reiterate that it was great to see it in Wizard, and I showed it to all my friends saying "See? SEE!!!" I think I will write a letter to Wizard thanking them for running the story, and mention the web site as well.

Anyway, that's about it for now. Just wanted to give you some feedback. Take care.

STEPHAN MUKAI

VIA E-MAIL

Hello, Mr. Wagner.

I received my copy of Snowblind yesterday. I just thought you might want to know, although I don't know if you were really waiting on tenterhooks for word from me.

What can I say about your book? I'm a reporter, and I'm having a hard time putting what I feel about it into words.

I read it in one sitting. I lost track of the time reading it. I forgot about the cup of coffee that I had poured myself; this, if you know what kind of a coffee junkie I am, is extraordinary.

It's been a day since I read it and I'm still trying to digest it. Still, I have been able to come up with three things:

1. I wasn't into alternative comics before, but I am now.
2. This is a FINE piece of work—maybe one of the best books, comic or otherwise, that I've ever read.

3. You have just made yourself a loyal—and paying—fan.

Thank you very much for the book and keep up the good fight.

Regards,

SEAN DAILY

VIA E-MAIL

Just want to start off by saying that while yes, long lag time between issues is annoying, I still felt the book was good enough to be worth subscribing to (and so far the only one I've subscribed to, much as C.J. Cherryh's the only fiction author I've bought in hardback yet). If the move will help you concentrate more on the book, then I'm all for it.

To end, I think you're handling this transition great, not everyone would go this far to try and ease things for their readers. (Sure it just seems like common sense, but working in a service field, I get to see often just how uncommon common sense is.)

STEVE MARTINDALE

VIA E-MAIL

March 6, 1974

The Adventures OF **SUPER DYNAMO BOY**

by JOEY McLYON

Grade 3

Creative Writing - 2nd period
Mrs. MacCrory





One day 8-year-old Jimmy
was walking home from school
when all of a sudden Mars
blew up!



Then a big car stopped & some men from the government got out. "Hello Jimmy," they said. "Did you know Mars just blew up?" "Yes," said Jimmy, "it was loud!"

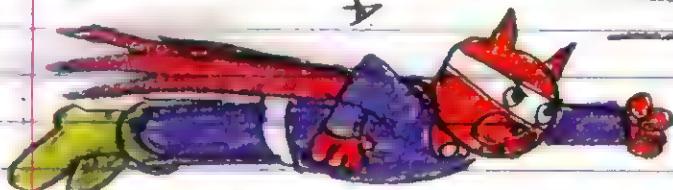
"We want to find out who the culprit is, Jimmy!" said the government men. "Can you tell us where we can find SUPER-DYNAMO Boy!?"

Jimmy was nervous! He couldn't give away his secret identity— HE was SUPERDYNAMO Boy!!!! "I... I think my mom wants me to go to the store."

"That's O.K. Jimmy" said the government men. "We will write your mom a note." So Jimmy sighed & went with them!

When they got to the Pentagon
Jimmy said "Excuse me, can I
make a phone call?" "Sure Jimmy,
there's the phone booth right there!"

Jimmy jumped in, said the
magic word and — PRESTO! — he
became SUPERDYNAMO BOY!



Jimmy flew straight to Mars to
look for clues!

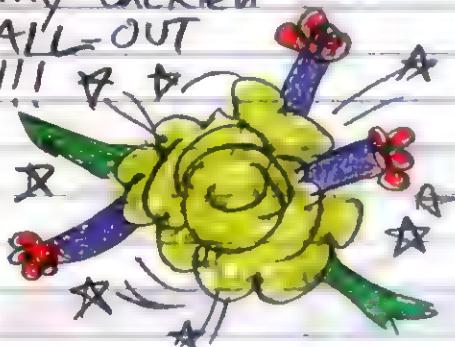
Then he remembered Mars wasn't
there any more so he decided to
fly to Jupiter instead!



On Jupiter Jimmy saw an ugly green alien trying to hide his bazooka!

"Stop!" yelled Jimmy "You are under arrest for blowing up Mars!"

"I—I don't know what you mean," the alien tried to lie! But he couldn't fool SUPER DYNAMO BOY! Jimmy tackled the alien and an ALL-OUT FIGHT broke out!!!



Jimmy beat up the alien
so bad all that was
left was ONE EYEBALL!!!



All the presidents of every country
in the world gave Jimmy a medal!!



But later his mom still made
him go to the store.

The End

A THOROUGHLY MERETRIOUS & SLIMY ATTEMPT TO SEPARATE YOU FROM YOUR HARD-EARNED MONEY

HEPCATS is happy at its new home at Antarctic Press...but you may be interested to know that you can still get copies of Martin Wagner's self-published originals directly from him! So whip out that checkbook and get crackin', kiddies! Great fortune will befall you! The opposite sex will find you irresistible! And all because you're a MAIL-ORDER HEPGEEK! **All prices include postage and handling charges.**

VOLUME TWO OF THE HEPCATS REPRINT LIBRARY

MARTIN WAGNER SNOWBLIND

SNOWBLIND, PART ONE

Trade paperback graphic novel
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